

sins which nevertheless we do not and cannot compel the English people to treat as sins, though we discourage them with all the energy of democratic displeasure." Drunkenness and other forms of vice are instanced as cases of the kind. "Every wholesome society does what it can to popularize a standard of manly citizenship which is directly opposed to selfishness, indolence, and dissipation." This means, in a word, we take it, that every State is bound to do all in its power to develop its own strength and the well-being of its citizens, and that the tendency of the free practice of suicide would obviously be in the opposite direction. Laws for the prevention of suicide are based, like all other civil laws, upon expediency. It is not easy to see how anyone could doubt the expediency of preventing by every means the prevalence of the practice of suicide, for, though it might be argued with some plausibility that the taking off of the man who has not nerve enough to bear the brunt of life's duties and trials can hardly be considered a loss to the State, there can be no doubt that the result and tendency of free and frequent suicide would be demoralizing in the extreme.

What is more needed and likely to be more useful is, it seems to us, a careful and thorough enquiry into the causes of suicide and of that tendency to its increase which most persons would probably agree is somewhat strongly marked at the present day. Here is a field of investigation which has never, so far as we are aware, been carefully explored, and from which might be obtained facts that would be highly serviceable to society, the State and the Church. A careful enquiry, as exhaustive as it might be possible to make it, into the antecedent history of a hundred or a thousand cases of suicide, especially those in which the act was premeditated and deliberate, would do much more than gratify a morbid curiosity. It might be found to be highly useful and instructive. We are not sure that such an enquiry might not properly be instituted by Government, or at least aided from the public funds.

Meanwhile it is not difficult to discover and set down in a general sort of way, some of the more manifest causes which tend in the direction of suicide. Among these we should be disposed to enumerate the undue stress which is being laid on wealth as a means either of social standing and display, or of material comfort. We should acknowledge ourselves much mistaken should not an investigation such as we have suggested reveal that a very large percentage of cases of suicide in these days take place among the class who prize such things unduly. So many place the chief or the whole value of life in such things as social distinction, or material comforts and luxuries, that when the means of procuring these things are lost, or in jeopardy, they can see nothing further worth living for.

Combined with these causes and often in consequence of them, is that nervous tension which is so characteristic of many, on this continent, especially in the United States. A nervous system unstrung and shattered leads directly to the lack of courage to face coming ills, real or fancied, and causes hundreds to seek refuge in death from the depressing consciousness of their own weakness and incapacity. There is in this a valuable hint for parents and teachers. It is of the greatest importance to the coming generation that the children of this day be taught to seek higher ends than those which are so little worth striving for and so easily missed.

This leads us to a conclusion, which we can merely state in the briefest terms. Mr. Ernest James Clark, the suicide above alluded to, who wrote to the Chronicle before committing the fatal act, was no doubt right in ascribing his deed and that of many others to the breakdown of that faith in Providence which is the strongest of all barriers in the way of self-destruction, as well as the most effective of all antidotes to the moral poison which creates the impulse towards it. Take away the belief in a Divine Ruler who will one day explain all the mysteries and right all the wrongs of humanity and in a great future in which will be found escape from all the trials and miseries of this life, and it is difficult to see what remains in which can be found sufficient motive to deter from self-destruction in those moments of despondency, which come to most lives, or sufficient hope to enable one to bear with cheerfulness the ills which flesh, in its best estate, is heir to. Is this faith in God and the future life declining? If so, what is the cause and how can it be removed?

#### PROMINENT CANADIANS.—NO. XLIV.

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It has been a subject of frequent comment in Canadian journals that Nova Scotians appear to have a special taste and aptitude for political life, and it is unquestionably true that this little Province by the sea has been the birthplace of a large proportion of the men who have occupied public attention in Canada during the last quarter of a century.

The subject of the present sketch was born at Paradise, in the county of Annapolis, in the year 1849. His paternal great-grandfather was a United Empire Loyalist who settled in Annapolis County. His maternal grandfather, Rev. James Manning, was born in Ireland and was one of the pioneer Baptist ministers of Nova Scotia. The present Attorney-General of Nova Scotia was educated at Acadia College, where he graduated in June, 1871, and four years afterwards he was called to the bar of Nova Scotia. While articled as a law student in the city of Halifax he became a frequent contributor to the press of Halifax, and took an active interest in current political questions.

His vigorous style attracted attention and in 1873 he became chief editorial writer for the Acadian Recorder, which position he continued to hold for fourteen years. Subsequently he joined the editorial staff of the Halifax Morning Chronicle, and for some time was managing editor of that newspaper. He did not confine his political labours to working with the pen, but was prominent among the young Liberals of Halifax County as a platform speaker and a sagacious counsellor in committee. In the year 1882 the Conservative local Government, led by Hon. S. H. Holmes and Hon. J. S. D. Thompson, now the Premier of Canada, appealed to the people, and Mr. Longley was nominated by the Liberals of Annapolis County as one of their candidates in opposition to the Conservative ticket. Annapolis County has been the scene of many keen political battles, and a political campaign in that county necessarily involved a prolonged and stubborn fight. In the elections held in 1878 the Liberal federal candidate had been defeated by three votes and the Liberal local candidate had also been defeated after an exciting struggle. The Conservatives in 1882, however, were confident of an easy victory in the local election in this county, and regarded it as nothing but a piece of presumptuous folly for a comparatively unknown person like Mr. Longley, who was living outside the county, to attempt to wrest the seat from them. But to their surprise and chagrin Mr. Longley and his Liberal colleague, after a tremendously bitter and exciting campaign, defeated the Government candidates, Mr. Longley being at the head of the poll with a majority of 79. From the day he first took his seat in the House of Assembly he became a prominent and influential member of that body, and two years after his election he became a member of the Executive Council. At the general elections of 1886 he again contested the County of Annapolis. His activity and aggressiveness in the House and on the platform had strengthened the desire of the Conservatives to defeat him, and a large portion of the Conservative press of the Province singled him out as a special target for vigorous and unceasing attack. The result of the campaign was very uncertain up to the last moment. On the night of the election telegrams were received in Halifax stating that "Longley was beaten," and the news was received with great rejoicing at Conservative headquarters. But later and more reliable news conceded his election, the majority, however, being only 16. He immediately entered upon his duties as Attorney-General in the Government, a position which he has since retained. Since he has occupied that position he has been the author of a large number of valuable measures dealing with criminal procedure, town incorporation, the abolition of imprisonment for debt, the assessment law and other important subjects.

As a speaker he has a graceful and forcible style, and in debate is the most eloquent and attractive speaker in the Nova Scotian House, his style being characterized by remarkable fluency, vigour and dash, and many of his utterances being rendered specially effective and brilliant by the use of a peculiarly stinging satire, the effect of which his political opponents have often feared and felt.

He formerly enjoyed the reputation of being the best hated man in Nova Scotia, and was at one time more persistently assailed